

CD 2001--90



Thursdays at Noon
presents

"Britain Before Britten"
Simon Fryer, cello; Lydia Wong, piano

Thursday, October 25, 2001
12:10 pm. Walter Hall

Frederick Delius
(1862-1934)

Sonata (1916)
Allegro ma non troppo – Lento

Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)

Chanson de Nuit, Op. 15 No. 1
Chanson de Matin, Op. 15 No. 2

Frank Bridge
(1879-1941)

Sonata (1918)
Allegro ben moderato
Adagio ma non troppo

Artist Biographies

Cellist **Simon Fryer's** 2001/2002 season is highlighted by his performance at the Massey Hall New Music Festival in Toronto for the North American premiere of Krzysztof Penderecki's *Concerto Grosso* per Tre Violoncelli ed Orchestra. Fellow cellists Roman Borys and Paul Widner will join Simon with the Esprit Orchestra and Music Director Alex Pauk for an event that represents the latest in a long list of first performances. Last season as a guest member of the St. Lawrence String Quartet, Simon collaborated with composer R. Murray Schafer and the CBC Vancouver Orchestra with conductor Mario Bernardi in the hugely successful World Premiere of Mr. Schafer's *4-40 - for String Quartet and Chamber Orchestra* as well as premiering Cello Concertos by such diverse figures as Ronald Royer and Sir Arthur Sullivan with the Okanagan and Mississauga Symphonies respectively. Elsewhere this season Simon will be presenting his recital program *Britain before Britten* - an exploration of early 20th Century British cello music - with pianist Lydia Wong and will be recording music for cello ensemble and soprano with Isabel Bayrakdarian for CBC Records. Chamber music with the members of the Toronto String Quartet and revered pedagogue Lorand Fenyves complements previous ventures with such luminaries as pianist Leon Fleisher, violinist Scott St. John and bass Robert Pomakov.

Music of a life so far..., Simon's first solo CD: released on Phoenix Records and acclaimed as 'a fascinating collection' by the Toronto Star and 'ideally brewed and technically complete' by the Winnipeg Free Press, presents a wide variety of repertoire written during the performer's lifetime.

Simon has introduced the music of Oscar Morawetz to Africa and worked in Canada with some of this century's most influential creators including Iannis Xenakis, Krzysztof Penderecki, Siegfried Palm, Witold Lutoslawski, Tan Dun, Alexina Louie, Chan Ka Nin and Gary Kulesha. He has performed and recorded with both New Music Concerts and Soundstreams Canada in Toronto, and is renowned for the warm rapport he is able to establish with his audience. Simon's diverse musical life is often featured by the CBC and is complemented by positions on the Faculties of the University of Toronto and the Royal Conservatory of Music and with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. In the summer, he teaches and performs at the ARIA and Kincardine Music Festivals.

Growing up in the North of England, Simon's precocious interest in the cello at the age of five proved to be sustainable with minimal parental coercion and he rose to advanced studies in performance at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. Searching for more than his home country seemed to offer, after a character-building sojourn in South Africa he immigrated to Canada. Essential, life-enhancing study at the Banff Centre in Alberta led to his move to Ontario and the invitation to join the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

As soloist, chamber and orchestral musician, Simon has appeared in more than twenty countries on six continents. He performs on an instrument completed in 1998 by Masa Inokuchi of Toronto.

One of Canada's most sought after collaborative pianists, acclaimed for her 'vivacious playing' (Daily Telegraph) and 'sparkling clarity' (The Strad) **Lydia Wong** appears regularly with the world's pre-eminent performers. Venues across the globe from Carnegie Recital Hall in New York City to London's Wigmore Hall have featured her expertise in partnership with such artists as Lorand Fenyves, Frans Helmerson, Rivka Golani, Scott St. John, Shauna Rolston, Patrick Gallois, and Evelyn Hart.

Ms. Wong has performed for networks in North America, Africa and Europe, broadcasts regularly for CBC and can be heard on Marquis Classics and Phoenix Records. She has been a faculty member of the summer music program at the Banff Centre in Alberta, Canada since 1992, joined the faculty of the University of Toronto in 1998 and in the summer of 2001, at the invitation of Music Director Krzysztof Penderecki, will perform at the Festival Casals in Puerto Rico.

Winner of Britain's prestigious Ivan Sutton Recital Prize, Ms. Wong has also received numerous awards from the Canada Council and the Floyd Chalmers Fund. She holds the Concert Recital Diploma from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, England where she was a scholarship student, as well as a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Toronto. Her principal teachers have been Paul Berkowitz, Pierre Souvairan and Boris Berlin, and she has worked intensively in master classes with Karl Schnabel, Menahem Pressler, Geoffrey Parsons and Leon Fleisher.

Born in Hong Kong, Ms. Wong emigrated to Canada in 1973 and now makes her home in Toronto with her husband cellist Simon Fryer.